



King County

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CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

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Regional Governance (RG) Subcommittee
King County Charter Review Commission
Meeting Minutes – March 20, 2008
Chinook Building, 5:15 pm—6:15 pm

Commission members in attendance:

Bryan Glynn, Co-Chair
John Jensen
Gary Long
Gov. Mike Lowry
Sharon Maeda
Allan Munro
Lois North
Mike Wilkins

Absent:

Doreen Cato, Co-Chair
Juan Bocanegra
James Williams

Staff:

Becky Spithill, Project Manager, Charter Review Commission
Mark Yango, Charter Review Coordinator

Council and PAO Staff:

Rebecha Cusack, Council Liaison to the Commission
Mike Sinsky, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Slonecker, Susan, Supervising Attorney (Employment), Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Nick Wagner, Council Co-Liaison to the Commission

Guest:

Karen Goroski, Executive Director, Suburban Cities Assn.

The March 20, 2008 meeting of the Regional Governance Subcommittee of the King County Charter Review Commission was called to order by Chair Bryan Glynn at 5:20 p.m.

- Letter From Council to Commission on Sheriff's Issue

Mr. Glynn began by referencing the letter from Council sent to the chairs of the commission regarding the proposal before commission for action regarding the sheriff's collective bargaining questions. The council is requesting explanations on the subcommittee's position taken and to explain the meaning of "effective participation" bargaining.

Mr. Glynn presented a draft proposed ordinance pertaining to "effective participation" and a draft letter that the full commission would send to the council explaining the position taken.

The ordinance key is in amendments to KCC 3.16.025 in which a new subsection 4 is added directing the executive to work with elected officials in collective bargaining negotiations. This language will balance interests on both sides and will require the executive to explain in writing, if the executive as the bargaining agent chooses not to pursue the elected officials issues.

Ultimately the council is responsible for approving or rejecting bargaining agreements, and the language, if changed in the ordinance, gives the council the legislative opportunity to find solutions to disagreements between the entities.

In researching the law in other counties, non-charter county codes are generally silent with respect to the designation of a county negotiator in the collective bargaining process. Four of the five other charter counties do not identify the sheriff as their collective bargaining agent. One county charter is ambiguous on this point. There was some discussion of the pros and cons in having co-bargaining agents and a single bargaining agent for all electeds.

MOTION: Moved that the subcommittee amend their recommendation to charter language already sent to the full commission with the addition of a supporting ordinance which gives more specificity.

Motion passes unanimously.

- Draft Response Letter to Council from Chairs of the Commission:

Discussion on edits, additions, corrections to the draft letter. The letter goes out when the full commission decides on it.

MOTION: Moved to forward the letter with additions and corrections as discussed.

Motion passes unanimously.

The letter is drafted for signature by the co-chairs of the commission but it was suggested that perhaps the co-chairs of the subcommittee also be added.

- **Regional Committees**

Gary Long and Mike Wilkins reported they are still working on draft language for the ordinance and charter. Some issues are still pending and under discussion. The draft presented to the sub-committee reflects both what's been agreed to at the table and what's been agreed to through ongoing discussions with council staff.

A fundamental difference at this point: there is not yet majority support on the council for a voting standard for the regional committee's initiated legislation as opposed to legislation referred by the council. The only language to date for moving something forward refers to council recommended motions and ordinances, which requires a simple majority vote of those present if there is a quorum. The difference would be 3 1/2 votes – a simple majority of those present assuming a quorum vs. 6 1/2 votes – a majority of the full committee. Total vote is 12. All the cities want to have the same voting standard for all 3 classifications of decisions made by the regional committee.

Council is still looking at this issue but Rebecha Cusack presented preliminary work done by council staff so far on changes to the draft language. She feels that the council would agree to a simple majority of the quorum but they are worried about too few votes on substantive proposals or approval of work programs. She also states the council is concerned with the chair not having the full array of legislative authority and the suggested changes are to assure the council that their authority will remain intact.

Mike Wilkins explained that the cities were in favor of requiring an action of record rather than a vote on submitted legislation. However, referral to another committee after the regional committee consideration of a piece of legislation was not addressed.

Rebecha stressed again that council has not reviewed staff's language yet and that it's not an action of the council until council acts on the legislation. Gary asked that before the council staff draft is shared with the cities, we get a sense of what the majority of council's feeling is on it between now and Monday.

Mike Wilkins stressed that everyone on both sides has worked in good faith, showing tremendous willingness and effort to make this work. The presentation is an update and not ready, at this point, for a vote. We need to see if an agreement can be reached before the next full commission meeting next Tuesday to introduce for the first reading but we still may be able to introduce this as a subcommittee recommendation with the reasonable likelihood that it will be fully agreed upon by the cities and county council shortly thereafter.

He also pointed out that the City of Bellevue does not support the voting structure in the charter language and wants that language changed in order to give Bellevue a discrete fraction of a vote. This position is not supported by of the suburban cities. The City of Bellevue may appear at either the public hearings or at the county council asking to go further with the voting formula and unsure of the City of Seattle's stance on this particular issue. However, both Seattle and Bellevue do support the rest of the agreement.

If there isn't an agreement, perhaps the commission can submit the current amended version of the recommendation to council to use as a foundation for continuing deliberations and discussions on this issue.

MOTION: Move to approve the draft version by council staff as a close-to-finish-document for the full commission to review prior to the Tuesday meeting recognizing that there may be some additional changes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at: 6:48 pm

Respectfully Submitted by: Charlotte Ohashi